

has to happen to the donor? They die. Christmas is God coming to earth that we might have a heart donor. Easter is the surgery. Jesus dies, donating himself that we might have a new heart; a heart that again beats out God's love, again beats in rhythm with God.

So shame and fear are no longer our heart beat, at the core of our being. But at the core of our being is a new heart; the living, beating heart of God. At the core of our being is this new heart in Jesus, beating out his rhythm of grace.

In Jesus we now live with a new heart; his heart. The heart of shame and fear no longer is the rhythm of our life. It's not who we are. Jesus heart beat of love and life is now the

rhythm of our living. It's not a forced external act but flows from the very core of who we are.

What did John the Baptist's disciples do when you pointed out Jesus? They ask Jesus where he is staying, and they go and stay with him.

They didn't ask his address, but they asked to share Jesus' life; after all he's now their new heart. The rest of their life is now growing in this most wonderful relationship that they share with Jesus. They grow as people, who in Jesus, are created in the image of God, for Jesus is the very image of God.

Today I'm being reminded that Jesus is

the 'Heart' of God who takes away my shame and fearful heart and replaces it with his own. What a life God, in Jesus, invites us to live with him, to live life from his heart.

Let's pray.
Jesus, thank you for giving my your heart beat so that I can live by the rhythm of you sacrifice; being free to give myself away so that other's might benefit according to their needs as I pay the price. Jesus I invite you to fill me today with the Spirit that I live true to your heart beat this week. Amen.



Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553

Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

15 January 2017 JESUS, THE LAMB OF GOD John 1:29-42



What do you hear God saying to you through these words which John the Baptist spoke about Jesus; 'Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!' (John 1:29)

To my ears this all sounds a bit foreign. I haven't grown up in a world where animal sacrifice is the norm. Actually I haven't grown up in a world where sacrifice of anything is a norm. Come to think of it Anzac day is one of the few times I hear the word sacrifice used widely. What images come to your mind when you hear the word sacrifice?

The image of a lamb is also somewhat foreign to me as I grew up in the city. There weren't a lot of lambs to be found in Blair Athol when I was growing up. I remember seeing lambs on the occasions

we went to visit relatives out in the country. I loved to see them running around, they looked cute; and still do. So I don't link lambs with sacrifice; they're cute little animals that run and jump around.

As I was reflecting on this image I wonder if we might replace 'Lamb' with 'Heart'. Like in a heart transplant. One person gives their heart; meaning they die, and the other person receives their heart, meaning they live.

So maybe we could paraphrase John's words this way; "Look! The Heart of God who takes away the sin of the world."

The word 'Heart' reminds me of Psalm 15: "Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me. Do not

banish me from your presence, and don't take your Holy Spirit from me." (Psalm 51:10,11)

It also reminds me of Ezekiel where God is talking about what he'll do when he brings his people back from exile: "When the people return to their homeland, they will remove every trace of their vile images and detestable idols. And I will give them singleness of heart and put a new spirit within them. I will take away their stony, stubborn heart and give them a tender, responsive heart, (Hebrew – a heart of flesh). (Ezekiel 11:18,19)

Using the 'Heart' image, we could say sin has left us cold hearted toward God. Who loves getting the cold shoulder; I don't!

Being cold or stone hearted toward another person is certainly the death of any meaningful relationship. That's a good image of the word sin. Sin is describing the death of the heart.

When I look around the world and see what we are capable of doing to each other, it screams to me of a world where our hearts have gone cold, and in many cases are stone hard.

In saying this I don't mean to be pointing the finger, because I'm part of this world. When I look at a Hitler, or a Herod, or a Pontius Pilate; when I look at these people who are so cold hearted to anything other than their desires I'm looking at what I'm capable of. When I become fixated on what I want I too can easily use people to get what I want. I too can be blind to the plight of others.

This isn't the way God originally created us; something has gone

terribly wrong. In the very first part of the bible God shares with us his original design for people; "God created people in his own image." (Genesis 1:27)

Using our imagery of the heart; you'd say God created us with a heart of love just like his. A heart of grace

Jesus, the Heart of God

and mercy. A heart of sacrifice; putting others ahead of yourself. A heart that would seek what is best for the other person according to their need and we'd pay the bill. A heart that wasn't self-focused.

We were created in God's image so that we might have that wonderful capacity to love as God does. To be loved and to love, because that was our nature; that was our heart beat.

But something went horribly wrong. We were tricked into having a change of heart, a change of identity.

The devil tricked Adam and Eve into doubting God's love for them; and they believed the devil. He killed their heart. They chose to believe a lie and make themselves in their own

image. They didn't trust God, they were tricked into thinking they could go it alone. So the moment Adam and

Eve believed the devil, they died, their heart of love, the very heart beat of God was gone.

What replaced this heart beat of God? When you read on you find; "At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame..." (Gen. 3:7) The heart of love replaced with a heart that beats to the rhythm of shame, so they hide by sewing fig leaves to cover themselves.

And humanity has been doing that ever since. To impress my mates I did what I thought would make me look good in their eyes. My 'shame', my insecurity had me cover myself, and strangely often with actions you end up being ashamed of. A heart of love has become a heart of shame. If my heart beat is shame; how do you think that would affect how I lived? Would a heart beat of shame produce life lived to the full? Hardly!

The outcome of Adam and Eve's actions are far more reaching than just shame. They hide from each other and when God comes to see those he loves what happens; "They hid from the LORD God among the trees." (Gen. 3:8)

Notice the word 'LORD' it is significant because it reflects the fact that this was an intimate relationship. It's not just God, but the 'LORD', the one who has committed himself out of love to

these people. This is the one they run and hide from.

So God asks Adam and Eve why they ran and hide from him. Adam replied; "I heard you walking in the garden (which previously would have been a joyful noise; here comes their best friend, let's run out to meet him). Now we hear; "I hid, I was afraid

What do you need for a heart transplant?

because I was naked." (Gen. 3:10) The heart of love has been replaced by the heart beat of fear, fear generated by shame.

Hopefully you see that being naked is far more than not having any cloths. That's missing the point entirely. They are naked because they lost their very reason for being. They are naked because they lost their identity; the identity that came with being created in God's image with his heart of love beating

within them, beating to God's rhythm of life.

The imagery I see is that we now need a heart transplant. How many people do you think have successfully done their own heart transplant? Do you see a problem here?

I see that I need a heart transplant; I can tell you all the signs that show I've got an unhealthy heart, but I can't do what needs to be done.

What do you need for a heart transplant? A new heart and a surgical team.

Back to our paraphrased text: "Look! The Heart of God who takes away the sin of the world." Just what I need, a new heart. And this is the ideal heart, for if my heart is to beat in rhythm with God's heart, it's his heart I need.

So the imagery is that Jesus sacrifices himself to be our new heart. To get a new heart what